

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A method for allocating demand, said method comprising the steps of:

monitoring demand associated with a plurality of time periods;

offering an incentive to customers placing an order during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a low level of demand; and

withdrawing the incentive responsive to receipt of a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the incentive is a price discount.

3. A method for allocating demand, said method comprising the steps of:

monitoring demand associated with a plurality of time periods;

imposing a surcharge to customers placing an order during a particular one of the plurality of time

periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a high level of demand; and

withdrawing the surcharge responsive to receipt of less than a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.

4. An article of manufacture comprising a computer readable medium, said article of manufacture storing a plurality of executable instructions, wherein the plurality of executable instructions comprise means for:

monitoring demand associated with a plurality of time periods;

offering an incentive to customers placing an order during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a low level of demand; and

withdrawing the incentive responsive to receipt of a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.

5. The article of manufacture of claim 4, wherein the incentive is a price discount.

6. A system for allocating demand, said system comprising:

a server computer for receiving orders for a plurality of time periods, wherein the server is operable to:

monitoring demand associated with a plurality of time periods;

imposing a surcharge to customers placing an order during a particular one of the plurality of time periods, wherein the particular one of the plurality of time periods is associated with a high level of demand; and

withdrawing the surcharge responsive to receipt of less than a predetermined number of deliveries during the particular one of the plurality of time periods.